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INFO RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 7469  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 8858  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ APR LIMA 4917  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 0151  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 5550  
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL 3913  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHEHOND/DIRONDCP WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 002256

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/04/2017  
TAGS: [KJUS](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#)  
SUBJECT: GOC CAPTURES KEY FUGITIVE EX-PARAMILITARY LEADER

Classified By: Political Counselor John S. Creamer.  
Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

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Summary  
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11. GOC security forces arrested fugitive ex-paramilitary leader Ever Veloza-Garcia (AKA "HH") on April 3 in Antioquia department. Defense Minister Juan Manuel Santos confirmed Veloza did not qualify for Justice and Peace Law benefits and was subject to extradition. Veloza was an instrumental figure in Vicente Castano's efforts to create new criminal groups. Peace Commissioner Luis Carlos Restrepo told us on April 3 Veloza's capture sent a message to paramilitary leaders in Itagui and to renegade paramilitary Vicente Castano that the GOC is committed to combating rearmament. Upon his arrival in Bogota, Veloza requested to meet with DEA representatives. End summary.

12. (U) On April 3, a group of 20 Judicial and Investigative Police (DIJIN) officers arrested ex-paramilitary leader Ever Veloza-Garcia, (AKA "Hernan Hernandez" or "HH" or "Carepollo"), along with four bodyguards in a ranch or "finca" in Bolomolo, Antioquia department. Veloza demobilized in November 2004 with his Bananero Bloc--he was also spokesperson for the Calima Bloc--but went into hiding last August when paramilitary leaders were asked to turn themselves in and submit to the Justice and Peace Law (JPL). Defense Minister Santos confirmed Veloza had lost the opportunity to seek JPL benefits and was subject to extradition.

13. (C) A Police statement said Veloza was charged with murders, terrorism, and forcibly displacing people from their land, and for forming a 120-man criminal group engaged in extortion and assassinations called "Los Paisas." Many observers had told us the paramilitary leaders who refused to turn themselves in, such as Vicente Castano, "HH," "Cuchillo," and "Los Mellizos," were behind the creation of many new criminal groups and that Vicente Castano was using Veloza to extend his criminal influence from Antioquia to Vichada and Casanare (refs A, B).

14. (C) Peace Commissioner Luis Carlos Restrepo told us on

April 3 Veloza's capture was critical. Veloza was a key lieutenant of Castano and Diego Murillo (AKA "Don Berna") and was instrumental in setting up new armed groups in Uraba, Cauca, and Los Llanos. His arrest, as well as the arrest of Adan Rojas in Magdalena, sent a message to paramilitary leaders in Itagui and to Castano that the GOC is committed to combating rearmament. The next step will be to capture Castano, whom Restrepo claimed used international financial connections to fund new armed groups.

15. (C) Following his arrest and upon his arrival in Bogota, Veloza asked to meet with DEA representatives. Veloza was advised of his rights and agreed to speak with DEA without a lawyer present. DEA officers told us Veloza admitted his involvement in the AUC as a leader and commander of the Bananero and Colima blocs, as well as his drug trafficking relationships. Veloza is not under indictment in the U.S. at this time.  
Drucker